

realencouragement

Lakeshore Community Church

realencouragement.org

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When God seems so far away

Now that Summer is nearing an end and those of us who have been away on trips, breaks and vacations are coming back to church more consistently (right? ☺), it seems like a good time to ask another question about “being away”.

Has God ever seemed so far away to you?

Maybe it was a trial that caused God to seem distant in His silence. Or perhaps it was a disappointment that caused you to wonder about God’s presence. Whatever it was (or is) that caused you to think God isn’t very close, there is good news. God is always closer to you than YOU think He is!

Starting on September 19, we’re beginning a church-wide experience through a series we’re calling, “*God Is Closer Than You Think*”. It is more than just a Sunday series, it is a six-week, church-wide experience that will involve Community Groups. Each week after the Sunday message, a number of Community Groups will meet throughout the week to watch video teaching by Pastor John Ortberg, and follow that up with a discussion to help add even more practical application to this topic than Sunday services alone can provide.

Honestly, I am super excited about this series because I want to get even closer to God. And truth be told, all of us need to be closer to God as well. What’s not to like about that? But it will not happen unless we truly commit ourselves fully to getting everything we can from a series that will bring us closer to God.

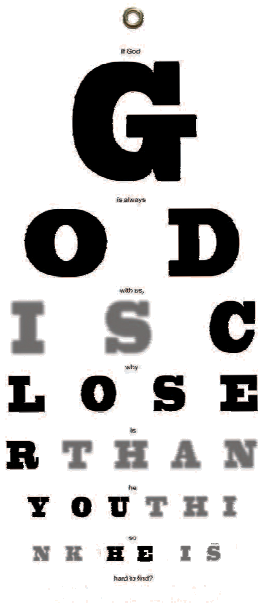
So, if getting closer to God is truly your priority then...

- 1) **Be at church faithfully starting on September 12**, the Sunday after Labor Day. We’ll have a special kick-off service entitled, “*Everybody Needs Somebody*.”
- 2) **Sign up for a Community Group that will meet for six consecutive weeks following the Sunday, September 19 service.** You’ll need to purchase a study guide for just \$10 each (each person should have their own guide) and find a group that meets on a day you can attend. Community Group sign ups are still available at Sunday and Common Ground services.
- 3) **Consider leading a Community Group.** There are membership and training requirements, but if you meet them you can lead— better, facilitate— a Community Group. Contact Pastor Herb Lawrence or Kathy Shepanski to learn more but do it soon!
- 4) **Be really open, willing and ready to get closer to God.** God typically does what we expect He will. That’s faith. So come with an attitude that is humble and ready for what God has just for you.

Let’s all get closer to God together this Fall,

Vince

Pastor Vince



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Small Acts of Service

By Amy Mitchell

In August, LCC once again hosted the Global Leadership Summit. I always look forward to this event, knowing that I will experience something that will refresh my mind and spirit. This year, I did something I have never done—I volunteered rather than attending as a guest.

Because of sudden, unexpected circumstances, I was not able to be at the Summit for the full two days. Therefore, I went into it with a terrible attitude. I was upset by the change in my schedule, frustrated at missing out on part of the Summit, and disappointed that I had been reassigned to a different volunteer team. Fortunately, God is bigger than my own annoyances, and in His infinite goodness He is able to use even His most stubborn and cranky servants. As it turned out, the team to which I was reassigned was a much better fit for me. I had a wonderful time, heard nearly all of the Summit, and came away with a changed heart and a better attitude.

In the last few months, God has really been teaching me about true servant leadership. I have been worried that I am somehow not doing *enough* of what God has been calling me to do. I haven't been giving enough, serving enough, or loving enough. Somehow, I felt that even in volunteering at the Summit, what I was doing was unimportant and would not make any difference. But God reached into my own self-centered thoughts and showed me that I had it backwards. I wanted to do one really big, significant *something* and call it a day. *There, I did my part to contribute.* That isn't what God wants from me at all! Instead, I need to keep working to serve others through as many little opportunities as God provides, trusting that He will, as Bill Hybels says, whisper to me what I need to do.

What small acts of service is the Holy Spirit nudging you towards today?

A Prayer for Yvonne

By MaryAnn Meisenzahl

A few days ago my husband and I, along with family, took a day trip to a small upstate town. We spent part of the hot day visiting an old 5 and 10 cent store. We enjoyed viewing the three floors of old time toys, cleaning products, perfumes, books, and hundreds of items we used decades ago to assure us the "good life." After buying a few things we were convinced we needed, we stepped onto the hot street for a leisurely walk. Our mission: Find the perfect place to eat lunch. Viewing racks of candy, popular when we were kids and smelling freshly popped corn piqued our appetites.

Our attention now turned to old architecture and window shopping, something grabbed us, forcing us to stop. Taped inside the window of an empty storefront was a piece of cardboard, or some other kind of heavy discolored paper, scrawled with three words: "Pray for Yvonne". We stopped and stared at the sign, said our silent prayers and commented on the heart-felt request. A few feet beyond was another, almost identical sign, taped to the door of a stairway leading to the space above the storefront. The sight of the second plea sealed the urgency of the request, and in the following seconds our mood became pensive silence. Amid the background noise of traffic and chatter we again prayed for this unknown woman named Yvonne.

Who is she? Is she an elderly woman or a little girl? Somewhere between young and old? Is she lonely, or surrounded by family and friends? Travelling a foreign land, or in an alley down the street? Living in God's word, or on a downward spiral snared by the enemy? Was it she who requested the prayers or someone who loves her, if even for moment?

As I go between building an imagined life and praying for this unknown woman, I am forever linked to her by answering a poignant request. She is my sister, though I don't know her. Created before time we share our ancient beginning, and hopefully one day we will meet, praising God together in heaven.

Lord, bless Yvonne with all she needs, especially to live in You. Let her know she is not alone. Bless all who read the small signs posted on the old building, and encourage those who take the plea to their hearts then lifts it up to You. Thank You for a beautiful, purposeful day spent with loved ones and strangers in a small town. Forever Your servant, I ask these things in Your loving name, Jesus. Amen.



Finishing The Work Update
By Pastor Herb Lawrence

Our Finishing the Work campaign is eighty-four weeks into the three year monthly giving (through August 10, 2010). Our pledges totaled \$1,357,103 composed of \$574,028 in up-front gifts and \$783,075 over three years (weekly, monthly, annual and special pledges).

To date we have received \$950,183 consisting of \$580,493 up-front gifts and \$369,690 toward the 3 year total. Percentage-wise, we have received 70% of the total pledged, 101% of pledged up-front gifts, and 47% of the 3 Year total pledge. Using the three-year time (target = 84/156) we are 54% into the campaign. Using the pledged up-front and time target percentage of the three year total we are 73% into the campaign dollar-wise.

The table below illustrates where we stand on Finishing The Work.

	Pledge	Up Front	Over 3 Years
Pledge	\$ 1,357,103	\$ 574,028	\$ 783,075
Actual	\$ 950,183	\$ 580,493	\$ 369,690
Actual TD Percent	70%	101%	47%
Target TD Percentage	73%	100%	54%

We have seen the completion of LC2 building construction and “outfitting” the ISM and Friendship Company rooms along with basic equipment in our kitchen. In addition we have upgraded our auditorium sound system with new speakers and soundboard as well as acoustical treatment for the walls. We’ve accomplished plenty in the last year and a half and this is because of your generosity and commitment.

But the work is not finished. We still have a number of items left including sound-treating the multi-purpose room, finishing the storage building and upgrading the lighting and video in our sanctuary. Although we are behind on our FTW giving, we thank you for your generosity thus far and ask for your continued support of the campaign to meet our pledge goal and completely FINISH THE WORK.

Mozambique 2010
By Cory Hunneyman

This summer Lakeshore’s Student Ministry sent a team of five students and three adult leaders to Dondo, Mozambique to help serve alongside Children’s Relief International in their great work to the poor. Most of the individuals we came in contact with make less than a dollar a day. As you can imagine, the realities were harsh and we spent our time processing it all and trying to figure out how we could encourage these beautiful people. We saw poverty that couldn’t be captured in a magazine. We held children with HIV and served soup to women who were deeply sick. We built friendships with other teenagers that probably won’t live as long as we will. We ate their food, we slept in their homes, we sang their songs, and we tried to learn their culture. And we came back changed.

The world looks different to each team member now. We don’t read our Bibles the same way anymore. We interact with prayer on a different level. We have a higher appreciation for ministry outside the church’s walls, and we’re driven to meet the real needs of people here in Rochester. We want to make a difference.

One of the hardest things for us to do now that we’re back is to answer the question “How was your trip?” while walking through the atrium. Thirty seconds just isn’t enough time. Each team member has stories to share and would love to share a meal with you and your family while unpacking their experiences. Feel free to set up a time with them and listen to what God did.

There are still lots of memories to process and many emotions to feel. This is a painful and often difficult undertaking. Please pray for the team during the next few months as we seek to live out the new work God has begun in us!





3651 Latta Road
Rochester, NY 14612-2813

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www.lakeshorechurch.org
Real Encouragement is published quarterly as a ministry of Lakeshore Community Church.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ME, MYSELF AND WHY?

Sept 5 Becoming An Anti-Atlas
Set.12 Everybody Needs Somebody

GOD IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Sep.19 The Promise: God Wants To Be With You
Sep.26 The Choice: Finding God In Your World
Oct. 3 The Presence: God Living In You
Oct.10 The Voice: When God Speaks, Let’s Listen
Oct.17 The People: God Meets You Where You Are
Oct.24 The Kingdom: Heaven On Earth?
Oct.31 Baptism: So You Really Want To Be Close To God? (Baptism
Celebration Service)

RETRO: A CANDID LOOK AT OUR PAST

Nov. 7 The 60’s: The Sexual Revolution Revisited
Nov.14 The 70’s: Lose The Leisure Suit
Nov.21 The 80’s: So You Want To Be A Yuppie?
Nov.28 The 90’s: The Need For Integrity
Dec. 5 The 2000’s: A New Millennium Of Uncertainty
Dec.12 The 2010’s: What Will History Write About Us?

COMMON GROUND MIDWEEK SERVICES

Sep. 16 Vision Night 2010:
Get the latest on LCC

**Due to “God Is Closer Than You Think” Community Groups,
there will be no October Common Ground.**

HOT POTATO ISSUES

Nov. 4 Once Saved, Always Saved?
Nov.18 Divorce And Remarriage
Dec. 2 What About Those Who’ve Never Heard?
Dec.16 Abortion: Just A Choice?